



# The Resilience of the Latin American Right

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**The Resilience of the Latin American Right** From Johns Hopkins University Press

Since the late 1990s, when Latin American countries began making a "turn to the left," political parties and candidates on the right end of the partisan spectrum have had a difficult time achieving electoral success. Although the left turn can be seen as a natural reaction to the public's general dissatisfaction with the conservative modernization policies of the 1980s and 1990s, left-of-center politics are by no means permanent. In *The Resilience of the Latin American Right*, Juan Pablo Luna and Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser seek to "right" this view by explaining the strategies conservative political parties have used to maintain a foothold in the region's electoral and governance processes.

The editors provide an analytical framework for conceptualizing the right that works for both historic and contemporary politics, and the volume's contributors use the framework to evaluate right-of-center political activity across the continent. They find that conservative forces are pursuing a range of adaptive strategies, including nonelectoral and nonpartisan tactics. The book's four thematic sections include an analysis of parties and elections in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Mexico, Peru, and Venezuela.

Students and scholars of both Latin American politics and comparative politics will find *The Resilience of the Latin American Right* of vital interest.

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## **The Resilience of the Latin American Right From Johns Hopkins University Press Bibliography**

- Sales Rank: #1311480 in Books
- Published on: 2014-07-24
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.25" h x .92" w x 6.13" l,
- Binding: Paperback
- 392 pages

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## **Editorial Review**

### Review

Latin America specialists love studying the left, but neglect the right?although the right often plays an important political role. By offering the most well-researched, comprehensive, and interesting analysis of rightwing forces, movements, and parties in many years, Luna and Rovira Kaltwasser's collection takes a major step toward filling this striking gap in the literature. Highly recommended!

(Kurt Weyland, University of Texas at Austin)

Juan Pablo Luna and Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser make an important and timely contribution to comparative politics and to contemporary scholarship on Latin America. This is a theoretically rich and empirically ambitious volume, with contributions from top U.S. and Latin American scholars. At a time when studies of the left are proliferating in the discipline, this volume provides a needed new perspective on how the right has played a key role in shaping contemporary Latin American politics.

(Edward L. Gibson, Northwestern University)

*The Resilience of the Latin American Right* makes a timely contribution to our understanding of a chronically under-studied subject. Luna and Rovira Kaltwasser provide a useful new conceptualization of what it means to be 'right' in contemporary Latin America. More than any other existing study, the volume explores a range of issues that are critical to understanding the trajectory of right wing parties in Latin America's democratic era, including the causes of traditional conservative party decline, the striking failure of most right wing parties to turn the favorable conditions created by the Washington Consensus into longer-term partisan gains, and the diverse strategies pursued by right wing forces during the post-2000 'left turn.' The volume also highlights some surprising (but important) sources of new right party-building, including personalistic leadership and authoritarian inheritance. This book will quickly find its way onto many reading lists. I learned much from it.

(Steven Levitsky, Harvard University)

How has the political right reacted to the current 'turn to the left' in Latin America? This fascinating collection offers us carefully crafted answers from throughout the continent, enlightening us about a range of activities that will shape the quality of democracy for Latin Americans for years to come. This is a highly original and conceptually sophisticated analysis of actors who merit much more attention than they've received thus far and is essential reading for anyone who seeks to understand the full implications of the conservative modernization initiatives of the recent past.

(Nancy Bermeo, Oxford University)

Clearly, any understanding of contemporary Latin American politics requires a re-examination of the traditional left-right divide?and this book fills a gaping hole.

(Timothy J. Powers *Americas Quarterly*)

A valuable, wide-ranging survey of the region's understudied right-wing parties, personalities, and programs.

(Richard Feinberg *Foreign Affairs*)

*The Resilience of the Latin American Right* fills a void in the literature on Latin American politics by presenting a systematic analysis of conservative rule and influence outside of government.

(*Choice*)

About the Author

**Juan Pablo Luna** is an associate professor and director of graduate studies at the Instituto de Ciencia Política, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile. **Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser** is an associate professor at the School of Political Science, Diego Portales University (Chile).

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**Nicholas Buchanan:**

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